

# Consular Section Quarterly Newsletter — U.S. Embassy, Port au Prince, Haiti

## Issue No. 2



### Greetings from Consul General Donald L. Moore



During mid-April, we moved to our beautiful new Embassy in Tabarre. Although the move required a lot of hard work, enormous effort and patience, it is wonderful to now have every U.S. Government agency, section and staff under one roof.

Our new Consular Section is well organized and structured to provide efficient and courteous service to the public. During the move, American Citizen Services (ACS) provided emergency services to U.S. citizens and was up and running to provide full routine services well before any other unit or section of the Embassy. I am very proud of this accomplishment because providing these vital services to Americans is of paramount importance to our Mission.

All American citizens traveling to or residing in Haiti should be familiar with the State Department's Travel Warning at: [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov). Please see the latest Travel Warning on Page 2. Keep in mind, that the hurricane season in Haiti extends from June 1 thru November 30. Please refer to page 4 for important information and precautionary measures to take in case of a hurricane. Please be prepared!

Best wishes to all American citizens residing in Haiti for a happy July Fourth, and a very safe and enjoyable summer,

*Donald L. Moore*

### CONSULAR NEWS FLASH!!

**U.S. Embassy Moved to Tabarre:** The U.S. Embassy moved to Tabarre! Our new Embassy is located at: Boulevard du 15 Octobre, Tabarre 41, Tabarre, Haiti (across from Valerio Canez).



**Appointments Required for all ACS Routine Services:** Effective August 1, 2008 ACS will require appointments for the following routine services: U.S. Passports, Notarials and Federal Benefits. Appointments for Consular Reports of Birth Abroad (CRBA) applications are still required. For all appointments please phone: 2-229-8000 Mon. to Fri., 1:00-3:00 p.m. Please follow the telephone prompts to obtain the best service.

**ACS will Begin a New Courier Service to Deliver U.S. Passports and Consular Reports of Birth Abroad:** Effective August 1, 2008 ACS will begin a courier service to deliver your U.S. passports and Consular Reports of Birth Abroad (CRBA) to your doorstep or to a pick-up site located in either downtown Port-au-Prince or Cap Haitien. The cost of the service will be either US\$10.00 or US\$5.00, depending on where you live or the service you desire. Please note that once we institute the courier service, it will be the only method to receive your passport or CRBA, except in extreme emergency circumstances.

### U.S. EMBASSY HOLIDAYS

January 1 (Tuesday)  
January 2 (Wednesday)  
January 21 (Monday)  
February 5 (Tuesday)  
February 18 (Monday)  
March 21 (Friday)  
May 1 (Thursday)  
May 22 (Thursday)  
May 26 (Monday)  
July 4 (Friday)  
August 15 (Friday)  
September 1 (Monday)  
October 13 (Monday)  
October 17 (Friday)  
November 11 (Tuesday)  
November 18 (Tuesday)  
November 27 (Thursday)  
December 25 (Thursday)

New Year's Day  
Ancestors' Day  
Martin Luther King's Day  
Carnival  
Presidents' Day  
Good Friday  
Labor Day  
Corpus Christi  
Memorial Day  
Independence Day  
Assumption Day  
Labor Day  
Columbus Day  
Death of Dessalines  
Veterans' Day Observed  
Battle of Vertieres  
Thanksgiving Day  
Christmas

U.S./Local  
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### CONSULAR SECTION HOURS OF OPERATION

#### AMERICAN CITIZEN SERVICES (ACS):

##### Passport Services and General Information:

Mon.—Fri., 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon.

**Birth Registration :** By appointment only; please phone: 2-229-8000, Mon. —Fri., 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.). Appointments are scheduled from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m., Mon.—Fri.

##### Notarial Services:

Mon.—Fri., 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon.

##### Federal Benefits:

Mon.—Fri., 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon.

##### Phone Inquiries:

(509) 2-229-8000 Mon.—Fri., 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

(Please follow the telephone prompts to obtain the best service.)

**E-Mail Inquiries:** [acspapap@state.gov](mailto:acspapap@state.gov)

##### In Case of Emergency:

After hours, weekends & holidays: Duty Officer at: (509) 3-417-2399 or 3-872-1557, or U.S. Marine Guard at (509) 2-229-8000.

#### NONIMMIGRANT VISAS:

**E-Mail Inquiries:** [papniv@state.gov](mailto:papniv@state.gov)

**Phone Inquiries:** (509) 2-229-8000, Mon.—Fri., 1:30-3:30 p.m.

#### IMMIGRANT VISAS:

**Phone Inquiries:** (509) 2-229-8000 or (866) 829-2842 (USA)

**E-Mail—General Inquiries:** [papcons@state.gov](mailto:papcons@state.gov)

**E-Mail—Adoption Inquiries:** [papadoptions@state.gov](mailto:papadoptions@state.gov)

#### FRAUD PREVENTION:

**E-Mail:** [Papfraud@state.gov](mailto:Papfraud@state.gov)

#### ADDRESS:

Consular Section/U.S. Embassy  
Boulevard du 15 Octobre  
Tabarre 41, Tabarre, Haiti



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# American Citizen Services (ACS)

## Travel Warning

United States Department of State

*Bureau of Consular Affairs*

*Washington, DC 20520*

### HAITI

April 30, 2008

This Travel Warning is being issued to advise American citizens to defer non-essential travel to Haiti until further notice. The civil unrest of early April has subsided, but the political and economic conditions that precipitated these events have not been entirely resolved. Conditions may occasionally limit Embassy operations to emergency services. Americans are also reminded of ongoing security concerns in Haiti, including frequent kidnappings of Americans for ransom. This supersedes the Travel Warning for Haiti issued on April 11, 2008.

In early April 2008, there were violent demonstrations, looting, transportation disruptions, and up to seven reported deaths in Les Cayes and Port-au-Prince. Some American citizens were temporarily stranded in isolated locations and could not safely travel until calm was restored. Because political and economic conditions precipitating the civil unrest have not been resolved, American citizens should defer non-essential travel to Haiti.

The absence of an effective police force in many areas of Haiti means that, should protests reignite, there is potential for looting, the erection of intermittent roadblocks set by armed protestors or by the police, and an increased possibility of random crime, including kidnapping, carjacking, home invasion, armed robbery and assault. Americans in Haiti should practice good personal security, take commonsense precautions, and avoid any event where crowds may congregate. Even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn violent. Americans should closely monitor news media and the U.S. Embassy's website at: [http://haiti.usembassy.gov/warden\\_information.html](http://haiti.usembassy.gov/warden_information.html).

U.S. citizens traveling to and residing in Haiti despite this warning are reminded that there is also a chronic danger of violent crime, especially kidnappings. Most kidnappings are criminal in nature, and the kidnappers make no distinctions of nationality, race, gender or age; all are vulnerable. There were 29 reported kidnappings of Americans in 2007. As of the date of this Travel Warning, fourteen Americans were reported kidnapped in 2008. Most of the Americans were abducted in Port-au-Prince. These kidnappings have been marked by deaths, brutal physical and sexual assault, and shooting of Americans. The lack of civil protections in Haiti, as well as the limited capability of local law enforcement to resolve kidnapping cases, further compounds the element of danger surrounding this trend.

Travel is always hazardous within Port-au-Prince. U.S. Embassy personnel are under an embassy-imposed curfew and must remain in their homes or in U.S. government facilities during the curfew. Some areas are off-limits to embassy staff after dark, including downtown Port-au-Prince. The embassy limits (restricts) travel by its staff to some areas outside of Port-au-Prince due to prevailing road and security conditions. This may constrain our ability to provide emergency services to U.S. citizens outside of Port-au-Prince. Demonstrations and violence occasionally limit Embassy operations to emergency services, even within Port-au-Prince. The UN stabilization force (MINUSTAH) remains fully deployed and is assisting the government of Haiti in providing security.

The Department of State strongly advises U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in Haiti to register either online at <https://travelregistration.state.gov> or with the Consular Section of the U.S. Embassy in Port-au-Prince. The Consular Section can be reached at (509) 2-229-8000 or e-mail address [acspap@state.gov](mailto:acspap@state.gov). Travelers should also consult the Department of State's latest Country Specific Information for Haiti and the [Worldwide Caution](#) at <http://travel.state.gov>. American citizens may also obtain up-to-date information on security conditions by calling (888) 407-4747 toll free in the United States or Canada or (202) 501-4444 from overseas. In Haiti, citizens can call (509) 2-229-8000.

## American Citizen Services (ACS)

### VOTING

The November 4, 2008 general election is coming up very soon! Overseas, you can do your part to participate in the electoral process by voting absentee.



Complete and mail the Federal Post Card Application Form (SF-76), which you can find online at <http://www.fvap.gov/> or in hard copy at our American Citizen Services (ACS) Unit. ACS can mail the completed form to the U.S. for you.

Once your local election official approves your application, he or she will mail an absentee ballot to you.

On receipt of the absentee ballot, you will vote and then mail the ballot to the local election official in time to meet state deadlines.

Please exercise your right to vote!

### U.S. EMBASSY UPCOMING EVENTS!



**June 27 @ 8:15 a.m.**  
**Bi-Annual Wardens'  
Meeting (for Embassy  
Wardens only)**



**July 3 @ 5:30-8:00 p.m.**  
**Independence Day  
Celebration (by invita-  
tion only)**



### MEDICAL

Medical facilities in Haiti are scarce and for the most part sub-standard; outside the capital standards are even lower. Medical care in Port-au-Prince is limited, and the level of community sanitation is extremely low.

Life-threatening emergencies often require evacuation by air ambulance at the patient's expense. Doctors and hospitals often expect immediate cash payment for health services.

Further health information for travelers is available at <http://www.who.int/ith/en>.

The Department of State strongly urges Americans to consult with their medical insurance company prior to traveling abroad to confirm whether their policy applies overseas and whether it will cover emergency expenses such as a medical evacuation. For further details, please see the State Department's information on medical insurance overseas at [www.travel.state.gov](http://www.travel.state.gov).

### INTERNET-BASED REGISTRATION SYSTEM

U.S. citizens who travel or reside abroad may now register a record of their trip or residence so that the Department of State and/or nearby U.S. Embassy or Consulate can communicate with and assist citizens in case of an emergency. Registration is now online, and can be accessed at: <https://travelregistration.state.gov/ibrs>.

If you are already registered with us, please re-register online so that we can update our records. Through this secure, online registration system, citizens can register and update their contact information on the Internet at any time. The website also provides citizens with up-to-date travel information customized to their unique itinerary.

The data citizens provide is secured behind Department of State firewalls, accessed only by cleared personnel in U.S. Embassies, Consulates, and the Department of State, and releasable only with the U.S. citizen's permission under the provisions of the Privacy Act.

# American Citizen Services (ACS)

## HURRICANE PRECAUTIONS!!

The hurricane season in Haiti extends from June 1 thru November 30. Historically, Haiti has been spared from the most severe hurricane destruction. However, prudence suggests that everyone, particularly those who have never experienced a hurricane, should read this information to be aware of recommended procedures and precautions.

In the event a hurricane does strike, damage usually occurs from flying objects carried by high winds and torrential rains that produce sudden flooding and water blowing through louvers, windows, and under doors. Full force winds at rates up to 150 miles per hour are not uncommon for hurricanes. Rainfall floods constitute the hurricane's greatest threat.

### Every Household Should Have the Following Equipment on Hand During the Hurricane Season:

- 1) Radios. Be sure your hand-held radio is in good working order and fully charged.
- 2) Adequate Supply of Drinking Water. Keep several days supply of drinking water.
- 3) First-Aid Kit. Keep on hand a complete kit for dealing with minor injuries.
- 4) Adequate Food Supply. Keep a supply of canned foods on hand since stoves using bottled gas can't usually be operated during a hurricane. Your emergency food supply should also include some items which can be eaten uncooked or charcoal-broiled. It is not recommended that you stockpile vast quantities of frozen foods. If municipal power is cut and generator backup fails due to hurricane conditions, frozen foods will thaw and spoil.
- 5) Adequate Supply of Bottled Cooking Gas. Always have a spare tank of gas; deliveries will be disrupted during a hurricane.
- 6) Adequate Supply of Gasoline in Automobiles. It is suggested that during the hurricane season you keep your automobile gasoline tank at least half-full during hurricane season.
- 7) Adequate Supply of Diesel Fuel for Residential Generators. Make sure your generator's fuel supply is regularly topped off, and especially in advance of a hurricane.
- 8) Water Containers. In the event of electric power failure, water pumps will not operate. It is a good idea to keep containers for storage of water; these containers and bathtubs should be filled during the warning period.
- 9) Flashlights (with spare batteries) and Candles. Municipal power lines may be blown down or shorted out, and electrical service may be interrupted for some time. If your generator should fail, flashlights and candles will be needed.

### Precautionary Measures During the Warning Period:

- 1) Secure All Outdoor Items. Bring inside everything that is unsecured and might be carried away by the wind; garbage cans and lids, garden hoses, sprinklers, garden furniture, flower pots, etc...
- 2) Protect Windows and Glass Doors. Reinforce windows, shutters, and glass doors with masking tape to minimize the possibility of flying glass. Secure sliding glass doors to prevent them from lifting from their tracks.
- 3) Move Furniture and Rugs Away from Doors and Windows. Keep in mind that parts of your home may be flooded; you should move valuable items well above floor level.
- 4) Remove Hanging Items from Walls. Remove pictures, paintings, mirrors, chandeliers, etc. from walls and store them in an area that will remain dry.
- 5) Gather Your Family Together. Gather your family together and give them calm and simple explanations about the hurricane and instructions about conduct during the actual storm. Identify safe areas of your residence where danger from broken windows or rising water will be minimal.
- 6) Protect your pets and bring them inside.
- 7) Move Car Away From Trees. Park your vehicles in a spot where falling branches and debris will not cause damage.
- 8) Turn up Refrigerator. Turn your refrigerator to maximum cold and don't open unless necessary.

### During the Hurricane:

- 1) Use your telephones only in emergency.
- 2) Close all windows, louvers and doors on the windward side (the direction from which the wind is blowing) of the house. A window or door on the leeward side (away from the wind) of the house should be kept open. This will tend to equalize pressure inside the house with the pressure outside. It will also provide some ventilation. As the storm begins to pass, the wind will shift to the opposite direction; at this time, reverse the window and door closing pattern.
- 3) Remain indoors on the downwind side of the house away from windows. Beware of the eye of the hurricane. Should the "eye" or center of the hurricane pass in your vicinity, there will be a period of calm which may last from a few minutes to half an hour or more. The wind will return suddenly from the opposite direction, quite possibly with greater violence.
- 4) When closing windows, always draw the curtain to help contain any glass should the window be broken by a flying object. Stay away from windows, and absolutely avoid the temptation to look out and see what is happening.

### Special Instructions:

- 1) If at home when a hurricane strikes, do not attempt to go to your workplace unless you have been assigned specific responsibilities having to do with the hurricane.
- 2) After the storm passes, avoid driving except in extreme emergency. There will continue to be danger from debris and downed electric wiring, as well as flooding in low-lying areas.
- 3) Avoid loose or dangling wires. If possible, report them to EDH, the electricity company.
- 4) If possible, report broken sewer or water mains to the Water Department.
- 5) Prevent fires. The Fire Department will probably be unable to respond.
- 6) Check food that requires refrigeration. It may be spoiled if power has been off for some time.



## Nonimmigrant Visas (NIV)

### How to Apply for a U.S. Nonimmigrant Visa:

Persons who wish to apply for a nonimmigrant visa should visit a participating branch of SOGEBANK in order to pay the \$131.00 mandatory processing fee and obtain an appointment for a visa interview. Because of tremendous demand for visas, appointments are not immediately available. Applicants should plan ahead and allow several weeks or more to obtain the visa.

**Note:** The \$131.00 processing fee is non-refundable.

At the time of the appointment, the visa applicant should appear at the Consular Section with the following documentation:

1. A completed online application form [DS-156](#); and, if you are a male 16 to 45 years of age, form [DS-157](#).

2. A receipt showing payment to SOGEBANK of the \$131.00 processing fee.

3. A valid passport. Passports should be valid for at least six (6) months beyond the planned entry into the United States. (Expired passports with prior visas should also be brought to the interview.).

4. Two recent photos.

#### 5. Other Documentation:

Applicants for most visa classifications must establish to the satisfaction of the Consular Officer that they have binding ties to a residence in a foreign country which they have no intention of abandoning, and that they will depart the United States at the completion of a temporary stay. Such ties could include family, work, and property. Since each applicant's situation is different, it is up to the applicant to determine what his/her ties are.

### Visa Renewal Program:

If you obtained a U.S. Nonimmigrant Visa in the past and are applying for a renewal:

- You must have had a visa issued for multiple entries for a period of at least 12 months;
- Your visa must have expired within the last twelve months;
- The visa you are requesting must be a B1, B2, or B1/B2 visa. See No. 5 regarding information on documentation.

Persons who wish to use the Visa Renewal Program may contact any travel agency participating in this program.

**Important Note:** We are serious about visa fraud. Applicants should be truthful in the information and documents they provide. If an applicant submits false or tampered documents or willfully lies to the Consular Officer, he/she may become permanently ineligible for a visa to the U.S.

## Immigrant Visas (IV)

In general, all applicants for Immigrant Visas must be sponsored by a U.S. citizen relative or a prospective employer. The major immigrant categories are:

- Immediate Relatives
- Special Immigrants
- Family-sponsored
- Employer-sponsored

Unlike most other immigrant categories, immediate relatives are not subject to numerical limits under immigration law.

In order to better serve the public, the Immigrant Visa Unit of the Consular Section has created an e-mail address for general inquiries:

[papcons@state.gov](mailto:papcons@state.gov).

For questions about U.S. Immigrant Visas, petitioners and applicants can contact our information call center Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

An access card to use this service may be purchased at any branch of SOGEXPRESS in Haiti.

Applicants and petitioners must dial 011-509-229-5001 and provide their pin number to receive information on a particular case.



### Adoption Unit:

If you are planning to come to the Consular Section, please contact us via e-mail at [papadoptions@state.gov](mailto:papadoptions@state.gov) prior to your visit to request an appointment or other information. This will help us to provide you with assistance as quickly and efficiently as possible.

The following message will be generated automatically to confirm that your original message was received in our Unit when you have sent your e-mail inquiry to: [papadoptions@state.gov](mailto:papadoptions@state.gov)

*"We will respond to your e-mail inquiry to the Adoption Unit as soon as possible, usually within three working days."*

The Adoption Unit accepts drop-ins from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. every day except Wednesday. Due to workload considerations, we can not accept drop-ins at other times—instead, please contact us by e-mail for an appointment.

## Fraud Prevention Unit (FPU)

FPU is here to combat U.S. Passport and U.S. Visa fraud! If you suspect fraud, please contact the Fraud Prevention Unit or e-mail: [Papfraud@state.gov](mailto:Papfraud@state.gov).

### Fraud may involve, but is not limited to:

- false claim to U.S. citizenship;
- imposture of a U.S. citizen by means of an authentic, counterfeit or forged birth or naturalization document;
- counterfeit, forged, or mutilated U.S. passports; and
- false statements by anyone in connection with their U.S. Passport or U.S. Visa application.

### Avoid becoming a victim of visa fraud. Please protect yourself and your documents:

- Please keep your passports in a secure place; keep a separate copy of the passport photo identification page.
- Please keep your Social Security number out of public reach.

**When sponsoring or assisting persons applying for visas in Haiti, please remember not to mingle or have contact with the crowd outside the gates of the Consular Section building.**

-Many unsuspecting visa applicants have been swindled out of thousands of dollars by visa fraudsters. Your involvement with these disreputable persons may also put your life in danger.

-There are many U.S. visa scams on the Internet. There have been instances of fraudulent websites posing as official U.S. Government sites.

-Please contact the Fraud Prevention Unit if you know of anyone who was invited to the U.S. to attend a conference or seminar and they were promised a "pre-approved" U.S. visa. Never provide sensitive information online.